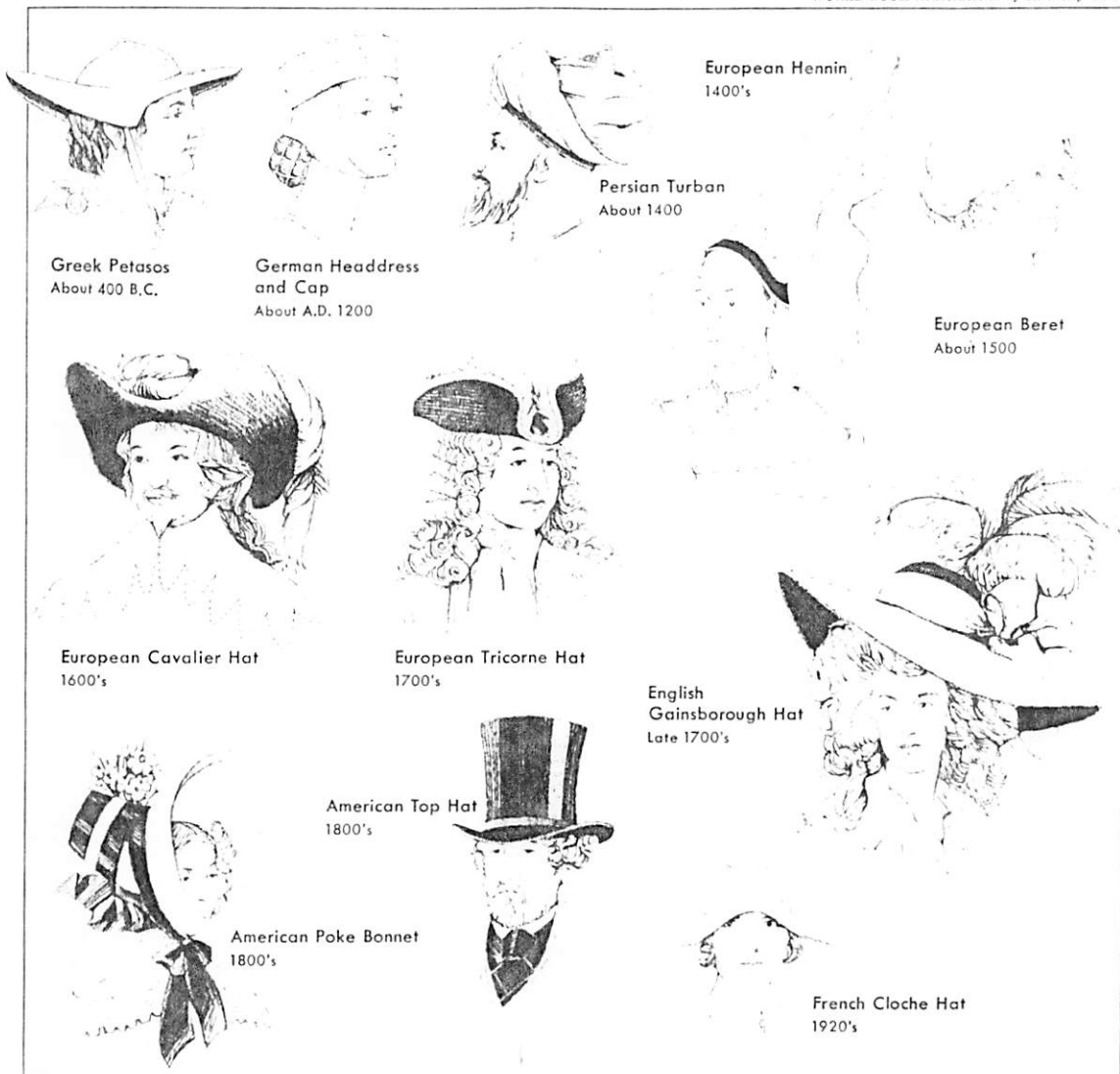


HAT

Some Hats of the Past

Hat styles have varied widely throughout history for several reasons, including changes in fashion and the use of different materials in making headwear. Most hats of the past have passed out of style. But varieties of some hats, such as the beret and the turban, are still worn today.

WORLD BOOK illustrations by Anthony Sarris



available substances and the people's customs. In general, the material used depends on the style and function of the hat. For example, most rain hats are made of waterproof plastics, and many summer hats are made of lightweight straw.

Hat Production and Distribution. Most hats worn today are mass produced in a series of steps that includes designing, manufacturing, and selling.

Designing. Hat styles are created by fashion designers, most of whom are employed by hat manufacturers. Most designers create a hat style by working directly with material on a wooden block shaped like a head. Sometimes they sketch their ideas first. Workers make samples of each new style, and models display the samples to buyers from various clothing stores. The

buyers then place orders with the hat manufacturer.

Manufacturing and Selling. After the manufacturer receives orders for a style of hat, workers make a pattern of the hat. Other workers then produce the hat.

In most cases, the material used in making a hat determines how it is made. A felt hat, for example, is made from wool fibers or soft fur. Pieces of wool or fur are formed around a cone in a thin layer and then placed in hot water. The water shrinks the layer into a piece of felt. The felt is stretched into the rough shape of the hat and then placed on a head block. A blocking machine shapes the crown and brim, and the hat is washed in cold water to set its shape. The hat is then sandpapered to give it a smooth finish, and the brim is trimmed to size.